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ABSTRACT

The guide, intended for group and organization leaders, presents activities and exercises to aid in personal and group goal-setting and planning for the future. The objective is to help groups choose goals which are sensitive to and oriented toward the evolving future with its rapid rate of change. The guide is presented in eight chapters. Chapters I through IV suggest exercises for training participants in observation and analysis techniques. They focus on current futurist thought; feelings about the possible futures of each participant and his organization; historic trends of the world, the participant, and the organization; perspectives about the present from the three viewpoints; and an analysis of assumptions and values that guide decision making. Chapters V through VIII present step by step goal-setting exercises. They include analyzing sources for determining goals; projecting and assessing individual and group futures and alternative futures; connecting images of the future to specific actions; and exploring the necessity of celebrating progress rather than dwelling on the gap between reality and possibility. Each exercise identifies purpose and procedure; and suggests various activities such as group discussion, brainstorming, listing and prioritizing, analyzing trends, and role playing. A bibliography concludes the guide. (CK)

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Choosing the Future You Prefer

a goal setting guide

written by: Edward B. Lindaman
Ronald O. Lippitt

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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PREFACE

In this brief resource volume we are sharing some of the orientations and activities we have found most rewarding in our attempts to "think in the future tense," in developing goal images about the future and in doing careful planning to enable us to step successfully into the future.

We do not have the expectation that you, or your group, should do all the exercises and have all the discussions, or follow exactly the sequence of our presentation.

We believe you will find a flexible sequence that can fit the needs, interests, and time schedules of your group. We have in mind agency and organization boards, annual meetings, goal-setting retreats, planning retreats, city councils, community meetings, the program committees of many organizations, student conferences, professional organizations, campus leadership, and churches.

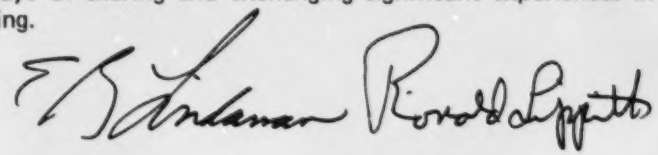
For these and many other groups there is the ever-increasing challenge of choosing meaningful goals which are sensitive to and oriented toward the evolving future with its rapid rate of change.

The choice is crucial—whether to cope reactively to the future created by others, or to work creatively and strategically to influence and shape our preferred future.

That challenge is what our little volume is all about.

Most of these futuring activities can be used in groups of almost any size, from several hundred to boards of fifteen or twenty, to committees of five or eight. Many of them make excellent program activities quite separate from goal-setting and planning although we think the greatest payoff is to connect future thinking to preferred future planning.

Those of you who use these activities will invent many variations. If you will share your inventions with us, we will work on ways of sharing and exchanging significant experiences in futuring.



CHAPTER I
WARMING UP TO THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Human beings on planet earth have always tried to predict and control future events. Today is no exception. The only difference is that now we are becoming more aware of *how much* we really *do* control future events. Where once we used astrology, tea leaves, frog entrails, or crystal balls to get insight into the future, we now have turned to more sophisticated methods such as the computer and future specialists. But that is still not a guarantee that we will create a *preferred future*.

In order to shape that preferred future, we need to hold in our minds an image of what it is that we really want. Human beings are the only creatures on earth, so far as we know, who can project and manipulate models of ideas inside their heads. Use of imagination is what propels persons into the future, whether it is by idle dreaming or conscious intention. In ages past, future thinking was generally accepted as the turf of the prophet; more recently, that of the science fiction writer; but now we are beginning to realize that it is within the domain of every thoughtful person.

Responsible participation with our fellow human beings in the creative process of choosing preferred options that will benefit life on this planet is an awesome task, and it is toward those engaged in that stimulating activity that this book is directed.

Thinking about the future is increasing rapidly. This is a hopeful sign. The membership of the World Future Society, for example, has grown from a few thousand in the late sixties to well over 20,000 persons world-wide. The National Conference of State Legislatures recently held a major conference under the theme "Foresight Actvities in State Legislatures." They defined legislative foresight as the function "by which the legislative process anticipates and deals with approaching problems, issues, needs, and opportunities, and by which the potential future impacts of pending or proposed legislation are determined, analyzed, and assessed."

In 1972 Congress established the Office of Technology Assessment to provide early indications of the probably benefi-

cial and adverse impacts of the application of technology, and to develop other coordinate information which may assist Congress. They have already done future-impact studies in the fields of energy, the ocean, health, transportation, and world trade.

In 1976 a group of eleven members of Congress created an organization entitled "The Congressional Clearing House on the Future." Now more than two hundred congressmen and their staff members meet monthly to discuss issues that affect the future. The organization is for the purpose of assisting members of Congress to become more aware of the ways in which the future is affected by today's decisions.

A House of Representatives provision, under the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974, assigned special foresight responsibilities to all but two of the standing committees of Congress. A portion of the act reads "and shall on a continuing basis undertake futures research and forecasting on matters within the jurisdiction of that committee."

Many states have futures programs, including: *Hawaii 2000, Goals for Georgia, Idaho Tomorrow, Alternatives for Washington 1985, California Tomorrow*, and many others.

Major universities now offer extensive courses, even degrees, in futuring.

The World Future Society recently published a book entitled *The Future: A Guide to Information Sources*. It has 600 pages!

On the way to the moon the Apollo astronauts made tiny "mid-course corrections" that enabled them to land at an exact predetermined spot on the moon. The corrections were small, but because the moon was far away they made a big difference. It is like that with us. Some of the changes we make in society, in our lives, or in our organizations, seem insignificant, but over the years they can have a major impact.

John McHale, a well-known futurist, has said that the question is no longer can we change the world, but rather the question *now is*, "What kind of world do we want?" This summarizes very well the most fundamental philosophy underlying the whole futurist movement.

Perhaps a good way to begin "oracticing" our own futures thinking is to test it against what some of the better-known futurists are saying. The first exercise below will help us to do that.

Exercise 1: Reacting to the Futurist

Purpose: To become more aware of what some of the futurists are thinking and to begin shaping our own responses to their ideas about the future.

Procedure: Get into groups of three or four persons and read the following paragraphs, one at a time; share your responses with each other. Take about three or four minutes on each futurist.

Margaret Mead: She deals with futurism from the perspective of an anthropologist. She says that the present generation gap is the best evidence that the current situation in the world is unique. Society, she says, has shifted from one in which the young learn from the old, to one in which both adults and children learn chiefly from their peers. She believes we are on our way to a third stage in which the old will learn from the young.

- Do you agree or disagree?
- What evidence have you seen that her thesis is, or is not, becoming true?
- What would happen if she were right?
- How would that affect value transmission, tradition, authority, child raising, etc.?

Bertrand de Jouvenal: France's best-known futurist claims that humankind is interested in facts only to use them in dealing with the future. The real use of facts is as raw material out of which we learn to estimate the future. Our ability to forecast the future does not necessarily increase with human progress, he says. The future of a society would be predictable only if the culture has no progress, that is, is changeless. Consequently, in a rapidly changing society such as ours, knowledge of the future is tenuous.

- Should this make futurism a hopeless task?
- How predictable do you think the future really is?
- Are there experts on the future?
- Is it possible to extrapolate accurately from present facts?
- Which type of fact lends itself to extrapolation?

Glenn T. Seaborg: As an atomic scientist, Seaborg says that civilization is rapidly approaching a series of crises that can be managed *only through a radical departure* in man's dealings with the relationship between energy and matter and that nuclear energy holds one of the crucial keys to the resolution.

- Does this view give you comfort or fright?

- How much do you *really* know about nuclear energy?
- Who do you believe when there are "experts" on both sides of the issue?
- Can your organization relate to this issue?
- Should it? If so, how?

Robert Jungk: Jungk was founder of the Institute for the Future in Vienna. He sees the need for a peaceful view of the future because a positive vision of the future would help humankind achieve peace. He believes that our ability to anticipate and forecast the future has improved dramatically in recent years, that the new data coming to us enhance our ability to deal with the future, and that this is one of the most hopeful postwar developments on the present horizon.

- What is the role of a positive image of the future?
- In what ways is an image of the future a "magnet" for drawing us out of the present?
- Who helps create such an image in our lives?
- Do we have reason to be hopeful about the future?

Arthur C. Clarke: Best known as a science fiction writer, Clarke believes that the best forecaster is not necessarily the expert, but rather the person who combines "sound scientific knowledge" with a flexible imagination. What the future will be no one knows, he says, but one thing is certain, it will be fantastic.

- How open are we for surprise in the future?
- What would be some fantastic developments?
- In what ways does our society help or hinder our ability to imagine?

Willis W. Harman: Director of the Stanford Research Institute, Harman says that western society is undergoing a pervasive transformation because the current culture is oriented to industrialization, and its so-called successes have resulted in other failures (overpopulation, dehumanized work, misuse of resources, etc.).

- Do you think industrialism (including exporting it to developing countries) can and should continue at its current rate of expansion?
- Do you believe, like Harman, that industrialism has its distinct limits?
- In what ways are we "locked in" to the industrial paradigm?

- How does that relate to acquisitiveness and consumption?
- To lifestyle?

Daniel Bell: As a social scientist, Bell sees the emergence of a "national society" creating three broad problems: Social problems are now national in scope, and we have established national institutions (such as HEW) to deal with their management. The future, then, will be shaped by such institutions. Secondly, an inadequacy of the present administrative structure is its crazy-quilt pattern of townships, municipalities, counties, cities, and states. It seems inadequate for keeping up with the needs of the times. Thirdly, the national capital has become a "cockpit" for mobilization pressures.

- Do you agree or disagree with Bell's three problems?
- Do you see them as problems or solutions?
- What does this say about the "communal aspect" of our living together?
- Will there be pressures for decentralization or more centralization?
- Which do you prefer and why?

John McHale: McHale, a futurist who is at the University of Houston, says that there are no local problems anymore. "We have reached the point in human affairs at which the basic ecological requirements for sustaining the world community must take precedence."

- Do you sense a feeling of global responsibility?
- What would be some of the changes in your life if you took more of a global stance in your living style?

Herman Kahn: Kahn has been called the "unthinkable optimist." He sees the future as an era of peace and prosperity. He sees it as an extrapolation of everything we have in the present: more consumption, more industrialization, more use of energy, more centralization, etc. He envisions a world-wide period of growth, trade, peace, and prosperity.

- In light of the possible need for an optimistic image of the future, how does Kahn's view appeal to you?
- Is it something you would *like* to see happen?
- Between Kahn's and Harman's ideas, which do you think is more desirable?
- Can humankind handle more of everything?
- Can the earth handle it?
- Where are you getting your ideas on this subject?

Alvin Toffler: In 1970 Toffler's book, *Future Shock*, virtually began the age of futurism. In it he said, "We are simultaneously experiencing a youth revolution, a sexual revolution, a racial revolution, and the most rapid and deep-going technological revolution in history. In a word, we are in the midst of the super-industrial revolution."

- Do you also believe this?
- If you do, what changes can you anticipate in your own life, or in the organization to which you belong?
- Does Toffler sound hopeful or unhopeful?
- If he is wrong, what view do you think is more accurate?

Exercise 2: The Future of Some Ultimate Questions

Purpose: To help us move into the future (tentatively!) by asking some of the crucial questions about our lives.

Procedure: It will facilitate the creativity of your thinking if you break into threes and fours and, after a few minutes of silent contemplation of the questions, share your answers with each other with brief discussion.

Imagine yourself *ten years from now*. Think about how old you will be. How old will your youngest child be? If you have no children, how old will your closest friend be ten years from now?

Here are the questions:

1. What kind of work will I be doing?
2. How will I learn? What will I be learning?
3. What will I believe in?
4. In what different ways will I find joy?
5. What will worry me the most?
6. What will I hope for?

After your small group discussions, convene as a total group and share a few highlights from your subgroups to see how divergent or convergent your thinking was.

Exercise 3: Our Organization in the Future

Purpose: To think about some crucial questions about the future of our organization.

Procedure: We suggest a personal "jot-and-call-out" procedure. Someone reads the question, everyone jots a phrase or two of their response, then the leader asks for a call-out and

tabulates the responses on a newsprint sheet or overhead projector transparency (if a very large group) or blackboard.

The questions to respond to:

Imagine it is *ten years* from today.

1. Will this organization still exist?
2. Will it be different? How?
3. Would you want to belong to it? Why?

Implications for today:

In the light of what you just heard projected for ten years from today, what are the implications for our thinking, planning, and action starting today?

CHAPTER II
REVIEWING WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

Lewis Mumford has written that each period of history has its unique *dominant* themes and its unique *emergent* themes. We have, for example, as a civilization moved from hunting and food gathering to agriculture, to industrialization and to cybernetics. Reflecting on each of these gives us a sense of movement through history. Dominant themes are fairly easy to see, emergent themes more difficult.

The exercise that follows is a way to move from seeing the more obvious dominant themes to a glimpse of the elusive emergent themes.

Exercise 1: Adjectives by Decade; Seeing Society as a Whole

Purpose: To make a very broad-brush pass at the recent past in the United States and to find out what kinds of themes seemed to dominate successive decades, then to move from these into a similar approach to the near-term future. Finally to try to find patterns that will give us some clues for dealing with the future we have envisioned.

Procedure: If it is a large group (up to several hundred) have an overhead projector; if smaller, use an easel with newsprint or a large blackboard in front of the group. The leader will set the stage by saying something like the following:

> We want to take a retrospective walk back through some of our United States history by using a series of words (adjectives, nouns, phrases) to describe where we have been as a society. We will do this in ten-year increments. Looking back at life in the United States during the time period of 1900 to 1910, what words can you think of that will describe that time period? For 1910-1920? For the 20s? The 30s? 40s? 50s? 60s? 70s? (A word for the 1920s might be 'flapper,' or the 50s 'Ike,' or the 60s 'drugs,' or the 70s 'Watergate.' But let the group come up with them.)

If it is a large group, simply have them call out the descriptive words, with the leader writing them down so everyone can see them. You need only six or eight words for each decade.

Do not try to be exhaustive in collecting them.

Note: Sometimes it helps to recall the words by thinking in categories. Possible categories include:

- socio-religious
- economic-resource
- scientific-technical
- political

Do this until you have completed all the decades from 1900 to the present year. This will take about twenty minutes. When the list is complete, the leader can again point out how these descriptive terms show shifts in our society over the years. How, for example, the decade of the 40s with its technological developments differs so dramatically from the 60s with its social developments.

Having fostered within the group a sense of historical movement, we now move to the 1980s. Ask the group *not* to call out any adjectives, but to break into groups of five or six and spend five or ten minutes (*much* longer if the schedule permits it) making a priority list of the unknown phrases that describe *what they think the 1980s will be like*—not what they prefer.

Have each group report, with the leader writing the words large enough for all to see. Each group reports only the word that is at the top (the one they are the most confident will happen) of their list. Later you may, if you wish, circle back and pick up other descriptive words or phrases that did not show up in the first go-round.

At this point, all the words describing the group's vision of the 1980s are in front of them. It is very important that the entire group now take about five minutes *to contemplate* what they have done. Look at the words, ponder them, and *look for patterns.* The leader then asks individuals to call out words or phrases that help cluster (or pattern) what is in front of them on the board. These words are also written for all to see.

Having spent about an hour on this exercise, the group will have moved out toward the future and will have imagined the *emergent themes* of the 1980s. If time permits, the group can again break into smaller units of five or six and reflect more on these emergent themes that have come out of the process.

Here is a concept diagram of the *kind* of data your group will have created:

ADJECTIVES OR NOUNS THAT DESCRIBE THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF EACH DECADE

1900-1910	Rural, isolation, immigrant, etc.
1910-1920	Rugged, Model T, confidence, industrial, etc.
1920-1930	Good times, flapper, growth, etc.
1930-1940	Depression, NRA, WPA, Roosevelt, etc.
1940-1950	War, atomic power, electronics, UN, etc.
1950-1960	Ike, suburban, rock and roll, apathy, etc.
1960-1970	Social revolution, hippie, drugs, space, etc.
1970-Present	Watergate, energy, environment, Prop 13, etc.

ADJECTIVES OR NOUNS THAT DESCRIBE THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE 1980s
What we think will happen

1980s	Lifestyle, atomic pollution, energy, interdependence, etc.

***PATTERNS* THAT SEEM TO EMERGE FROM THE LISTING SHOWN FOR THE 1980s**

Confidence
Survival
Lifestyle
Hope, etc.

Exercise 2: Our Feelings About Our Past and the 80s

Purpose: To explore the values in the group about various aspects of the remembered past and the predicted future.

Procedure: Each participant needs a sheet or card to jot on. Draw a line down the middle and make two headings to the columns: "Feel Good About" and "Feel Displeased About." Ask everyone to read the phrases for each decade and select and jot down two to four that belong in each column, then reflect on *why* they feel pleased or displeased about those aspects of the past. Then share the items chosen and discuss the values. Probe for interesting differences.

Do the same activity for the predicted decade of the 80s. Again probe the values underlying items selected as pleasing and displeasing.

Exercise 3: Decade/Adjectives for Your Organization

Coming out of the experience of Exercises 1 and 2, the group will probably be ready to apply the same kind of thinking to a more specific need they have: Looking at their own organization. By slightly adapting the exercise of adjectives by decade for the United States, we can move into dealing with a smaller unit of our society.

Purpose: To use the experience gained from Exercise 1 and to apply it to a more specific problem—your own organization.

Procedure: Follow essentially the same steps except that you will probably not begin all the way back at the year 1900. If the organization is fairly young, you may want to use one or five-year increments instead of decades.

Note: Sometimes it helps to think in categories here, too.

Some suggestions could include finding the word in each time period that best describes:

- Achievements
- Hopes
- Problems, failures, successes
- Tone, or trend
- Most valued in the leadership
- Any other topics that will elicit a broad description of where your organization has been

If your analysis is on newsprint, be sure to save it for later reference. You will find your group very creative, and you will not want to lose what you have come up with for the 1980s. It will serve as an important map for later, more-detailed planning activities.

CHAPTER III

HOW WE ARE SEEING, THINKING, AND FEELING NOW —ABOUT US AND OUR WORLD IN THE PRESENT TENSE

Awareness of where we've been, and of steps in our path of becoming, is important sensitization for achieving perspective and *feeling about today*, about *what is around us* now, and *who we are* now. In this chapter, we want to explore NOW without reference to past or future.

We will recognize as we attempt this focus and try these exercises that the past is very much with us, influencing the ways we are seeing and feeling about what is happening now. And we'll realize that the future is just a breath ahead, luring us into anticipations, expectations, hopes, and fears.

So it's a difficult, exciting challenge to open ourselves up to "what's out there" (our external environment) and "what's in here" (our internal environment) today—what we are seeing, thinking, feeling.

We are different today than we were yesterday. We are different today than we will be tomorrow. What we do with our today will use, misuse, or not use the resources we have developed in our yesterdays, and will help influence and create a tomorrow with which we will be pleased or displeased.

So let's try out one or several of these opportunities to explore, by yourself or with others, your personal or collective now.

- What are some dominant features of your world that you are aware of right now?
- What is happening to you?
- What are you doing?
- What are you feeling and thinking?

Let's try some inquiries to find out.

Exercise 1: My World-Now Check Sheet

Purpose: To become more sensitive and aware of the ingredients of your personal world right now.

Procedure: Get physically comfortable and relaxed with this sheet on a clipboard or something convenient to write on. If others are around, distance yourself from them; let your mind

focus on today, *now*, not yesterday or tomorrow. Underline and jot down additions after each question. Then prioritize and write your sentences.

1. *Observer Perceptions:* Taking an *observer posture,* underline the adjectives and phrases which best *describe* what you can see (identify) around you and inside you, and add others to help describe your worlds.

SEE OUTSIDE ME		SEE IN ME	
Crowded	Dangerous	Relaxed	Bored
Spacious	Friendly	Tense	Excited
Noisy	Hurried	Painful	Initiator
Quiet	Demanding	Attractive	Competent
Beautiful	Competition	Plain	Dependent
Crimes	Love	Handicapped	

Reviewing the words which are the most important describers of your outside and inside world, put a (+) beside the positive characteristics and a (–) beside the negatives. Now, with your observer stance, write a sentence or two describing the ways you see your world and yourself.

2. *Awareness of Feelings:* Tuning in now on your *feelings* about the world around you and inside you, underline the words that express your feelings and *add additional ones* that express the unique you.

ABOUT WORLD OUTSIDE ME		ABOUT INSIDE ME	
Frustrated	Loving	Upright	Loving
Hopeful	Ignored	Relaxed	Angry
Frightened	Influential	Energetic	Bored
Concerned	Overwhelmed	Tired	Dependent
Involved	Competitive	Ambitious	Rebellious
Discouraged		Secure	

Reviewing the words which best describe your feelings at the present, put a (+) beside what you regard as positive feelings and a (–) beside negative feelings. Now jot a sentence or two (as an insider who knows you best) expressing your dominant "feeling orientation" toward your world and toward you.

Exercise 2: Our Organization-Now Check Sheet

Purpose: To become more sensitive and aware of the characteristics of your organization and its world today.

Procedure: You may want to do this activity individually, as members of the organization, or you may want to do it as a group or subgroup activity. If you do it as a group, write on a large sheet of paper, such as newsprint, so all can see it as you produce.

Observer Perceptions and Feelings About the Organization: Taking an observer posture (from outside or inside the organization) underline the adjectives and phrases which best state your *observations* and *feelings,* or those of others, about the organization and add all the additional ones that seem relevant.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION		FEELINGS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION	
Organized	Authoritarian	Loyal	Discouraged
Disorganized	Democratic	Alienated	Resistent
Important	Laissez-faire	Non-influential	
Innovative	Productive	Exploited	
Inflexible	Competitive	Proud	
Obsolete	Collaborative	Ashamed	

Reviewing the words which are the best descriptors of the observations and feelings, put a (+) by the positives and a (—) by the negatives and write a couple of sentences describing the observations and feelings about your organization.

Footnote: This same activity can be done with focus on your community rather than an organization.

Exercise 3: "Prouds" and "Sorries" Exercise

Purpose: To share in a group, or several subgroups, a quick census of judgments of *proud* and *sorry* about current characteristics, activities and non-activities of the organization, (or community or the nation or world), and to share prioritizing judgments.

Procedure: If you are a small group of a dozen or less, work as a group with a recorder writing the call-outs on newsprint up front. For larger groups, sit in table groups of four to seven with a newsprint sheet on the table and magic-marker pen. One member serves as recorder. Since your list will be shared in a few minutes it needs to be readable.

Here is the Briefing for the Activity:

Pretend you are up in a helicopter, or on a flying carpet, looking down—this week—on your organization (community, state, nation, etc.). Call out your concrete observations of what you see/hear going on that makes you proud/pleased or sorry/displeased. (Draw a line down the middle of the sheet and put *Prouds* in one column and *Sorries* in the other.)

If the total group has done one list, ask each person to select, in his/her mind, three or four "most importants." Do a show of hands to identify the top items. Discuss *why* these were chosen.

If the listing was done by subgroups, ask each group to post its items on the wall (with masking tape) and ask group members to wander, read, and cast priority votes by checking, on the sheets, four or five *Prouds* and four or five *Sorries.* In this way, group sentiment will become visible for discussion of reasons for choices.

Additional Discussion Suggestions:

1. Is there a relationship between these "prouds" and "sorries" of the present and the evaluations of the past? (See Exercise 2, Chapter 2).
2. Are there some action implications that seem to emerge from the priority "sorries"?
3. Have you ever really celebrated your "prouds"?

CHAPTER IV
ASSUMPTIONS THAT STEER, RELEASE, AND BLOCK US

What we believe about ourselves or our group, or what we assume are the dangers and supports in our environment, or what we predict will be happening are all powerful determiners of our behavior—as persons, groups, or organizations.

Our positive attitude toward the future is guided by our assumptions. Our initiatives in creating our future or our reactions to our unfolding fate are determined by our beliefs. Our expectations of consequences, our cautions and risk-takings are all colored and channeled by what we assume it will be like.

So it is very important for us to explore our assumptions and to clarify the values which maintain them. Here are several explorations we believe will help.

Exercise 1: An Internal Dialogue

Purpose: Although each of us appears to be a single unitary organism, in reality each of us houses an "internal society" of parts of ourselves busily interacting with each other. Sometimes these inner voices are in outer disagreement; at times there are competing coalitions; and at other times they exemplify much harmony and agreement. It is very important for each of us to learn to listen to our internal dialogues and to use the data to guide our decisions. The main point is to *listen* to all the voices, accepting them all as legitimate and not inhibiting any of them.

Procedure:

1. Each person will listen in on, and jot down, the inner voices we can hear expressing different beliefs and attitudes about how much influence we can expect to exert over our own future. We can expect some of our voices to vary from assumptions about very little influences to beliefs in considerable potency to create one's own future. Write down as quotes all the voices you can hear as if you were writing a script.

2. Now review your dialogue and star (*) the voice you feel represents the strongest, most dominant theme in your dialogue.

3. Reflect on this voice. *Why* do you think this is a strong position in you? What causes shape that assumption for you? Do you wish a different voice were stronger? What would need to happen to strengthen that voice?

4. Now we suggest you meet in subgroups of three to five, sharing your dialogues and reasons for the dominant voice, and desires for change if any.

Suggestions for Additional Dialogue Projects:

1. You might try a dialogue of the voices discussing whether the world is becoming a better or poorer place to live in. Be sure to explore the *whys* of the dominant voices.

2. You might try a dialogue of the voices expressing opinions about whether your organization is becoming more or less attractive and significant.

Exercise 2: My Next 24 Hours

Purpose: To identify and clarify the assumptions or beliefs underlying our predictions about our immediate future.

Procedure: Each person draws a line down the middle of a work sheet.

1. In the left-hand column, jot down all the things you *predict* will happen (e.g., car will start, will not rain, son will call, will dictate to secretary, will cook dinner, etc.).

2. In the right-hand column, opposite each prediction, jot the assumption or belief that seems to underly that prediction.

3. Reflect on your assumptions and prepare to share your discoveries.

   a. Did most of the assumptions suggest that activities were controlled by others?
   b. Were there beliefs that you had duties, including some you didn't enjoy?
   c. What other ways are there of clarifying your assumptions and reasons?

Exercise 3: Some Things I Believe

Purpose: To bring out, clarify, and perhaps share some personal beliefs about several aspects of my world.

Procedure: You will want to use a different sheet for jotting down each of the stimulus questions which you decide to respond to. After you have written them, we suggest the following steps:

1. Ask yourself if there are two or three other beliefs you didn't think of the first time. Jot them down.

2. Mark (*) on each sheet the item (or two) which you feel is the most important belief.

3. Reflect on *why* you feel the marked one is most important.

4. Share your findings with a small subgroup if you feel it is appropriate.

The Questions:

1. What are your beliefs or assumptions about change in society? Is it usually good? changing too fast? out of control?

2. What are your beliefs about your own future?

3. What are your beliefs about the future of your organization (e.g. its stability, composition, services, etc.)?

4. What are your beliefs about future patterns of conflict, competition, cooperation, in the world?

5. What are your beliefs about the future of your country?

Your group may want to ask other questions. Be sure you always explore and share your *whys*, your reasons for believing the way you do.

In Summary: What have you discovered about your own "assumption-postures"? Should some of them be changed? How can one keep open to confronting and revising one's assumptions?

CHAPTER V
MIND-STRETCHING ABOUT THE FUTURE

White horse clip-clopping
Over the moonlit field
Oh oh
I'm part of the picture
Haiku by Basho

It is a basic shift in orientation to move from being an observer, an analyst, a reflector about what is going on in our world to becoming "part of the picture," an actor, goal-setter, doer.

As we work at taking an intelligent "doing posture" about our future, as a person or organization, we discover there are several different sources of direction for defining our goals. Let's review these to remind ourselves of some springboards and restraints.

1. *Our past—"It worked before"*

Often we depend for our future directions on what have been successful goal-achieving experiences in our past. "Having the governor speak got people out." "The annual dinner will raise money and get commitments."

2. *Our past's future is still unrealized*

It is sometimes instructive and embarrassing to ask, "Which goals we set a year ago are still unreached?" These goals may still be important to put in our future.

3. *What seems to have been happening?*

Usually we are sensitive to changes that have been going on in our environment or in ourselves. "Our members are becoming more insistent on having a part in goal-setting," or "Resistance to our policy of closed membership has been increasing." We see these clues of change as trends to take into account as we plan for our future.

4. *Pains of the here-and-now*

Evidence from some analyses of goal-setting is that future directions are often set by a desire to "get away from" some painful problem situation. Usually this results in very limited, unrewarding steps into the future.

5. *Adjusting to what "they" decided*

Sometimes a person or group "higher up" in the system has set goals we are expected to fit into and help implement. Our future is oriented toward helping them actualize their image of the future for them and for us.

6. *Interdependent neighbors*

Most persons, groups, and organizations are interdependent with neighboring systems which want to be taken into account in our goal setting. They may have expectations (that we'll share fund-raising efforts) or hopes (that we won't duplicate services).

7. *Successful models*

Sometimes someone we look up to, or compare ourselves with, demonstrates a very successful achievement of a goal. What we saw them arrive at is something we'd like in our future, so we are motivated to set the goal that seemed to work for them. "They really got payoff from automating."

8. *Extrapolating from what seems to be going on*

We are familiar with all the efforts to predict the future by extrapolating from the shape and rate of the curve of the past and what's happening now. "Looks like we will have 15% more membership in two years." "Teenage alcoholism will be rising and drug use decreasing."

9. *Leaps of imagination into the future*

The science fiction writers are perhaps the most innovative projectors of scenarios about the more distant future. They try to shed the bonds of past and present and imagine possibilities. They work on freeing themselves from "what is currently feasible" or "what they are ready for."

10. *Preferred images of potential*

Somewhere in between fantasized futures and extrapolated possibilities there are projections ahead in time to observe future images of what has come to pass that are desirable and within the bounds of feasibility. This image-projecting may draw on all the other sources of ideas, but is a freed-up journey into the future. We will explore it fully in the next chapter.

From this brief review, we can see how our orientations to the past and present may encourage or discourage our projecting ourselves into a future for us.

Our interpretations of our experiences with the past may have resulted: in fearfulness and caution, or hope and experi-

mental risk-taking; in a sense of potency or impotence about being able to initiate consequences we want; in confusion or clarity about where we've come from and how we are moving.

Our interpretations of our here-and-now world and experiences may be focused on failure or success, pain or health, isolation or support, deprivation or satisfaction.

Our orientations toward the future may be expectations of success or predictions of failure, optimism or depression, initiator or victim, immediate or distant, spontaneous or planned.

We believe the evidence is clear that thinking about the future, and planning for the future, are feasible, meaningful activities that have very significant payoff in a self-directed meaningful now, and in more desired consequences when our future becomes now.

Some Mind-Stretching Exercises

Here are several mind-stretching exercises that warm us up to thinking into the future—help free us temporarily from some of the anchors of past and present. As you will see, some are individual adventures, and others involve group interaction and sharing. We invite you to explore several of these.

Exercise 1: World-Transforming Innovations

Purpose: To imagine some innovations that would really transform our world in a significant way (socially, technologically, economically, politically, medically, educationally, culturally)—transformations that are really new, without precedent.

Procedure: Work individually, in pairs or trios. Many have thought trios were the most fun and best for triggering imagination. Agree on a time limit—say 20 minutes. See if you can dream up six unprecedented world-transforming possibilities in that time. One of you will need to jot them down so you can report. As you share them, observe how many had similar innovations, or aimed at accomplishing the same kind of change in our lives and world. Which one would you most like to see come to pass? Why?

Exercise 2: What's Missing?

Purpose: To imagine what is most missing in the world, your world, today, that you'd most like to see appear or occur.

Procedure: This is a good one to do alone. With pen in hand, let your mind wander. What would make a very important difference for you if it happened or appeared? What's badly missing? What would it be like if it came to pass? Write it down. Share your discoveries. Some groups like to do this by posting them with tape on the wall or blackboard or table. As you read, check the three you would most like to see appear. How much agreement is there? What reasons (values) are people using for their choices?

Exercise 3: Archives Commission—Year 2000

Purpose: You are commissioned to produce a document for the National Archives describing the various aspects of "our life today," i.e., in the year 2000. This will be placed in an interplanetary library capsule for future generations and populations.

Procedure:

- Put the chapter headings on separate sheets of newsprint on the wall, such chapters as "male-female relations," "adult-child relations," "environmental control," "communications," "governance," "resource exchange," "crime," etc.
- Now the group members walk around and each decides which chapter of the document s/he wants to help co-author. There should be two to five persons at each chapter sheet.
- Each co-author team lists, as rapidly as possible, all the ingredients that need to go into their chapter to describe the year 2000 in their particular chapter area.
- When the listing is finished (usually about 15-20 minutes), everyone wanders around reading the other chapter ingredients and *adding* additional ingredients they feel their fellow authors are forgetting to include in their chapter.
- Now each co-author team goes back to his/her own chapter sheet and reflects on the questions:
  1. What do these items tell us about what we value and do not value?
  2. What seem to be some of the main points for change?
- Present your discoveries to each other.

Exercise 4: Extraterrestrial Life

Purpose: To do some clear thinking about life elsewhere in our universe. It is the year 1985, and the 90-inch space tele-

scope (which will, in fact *be* launched in 1983) has been in operation for two years, and it has just been discovered, for certain, that there are planetary systems orbiting around virtually every star in the universe. There are 10,000 billion trillion stars in the universe, and all those within a distance of a thousand light years have been verified to have one or more planets circling them.

Procedure: Imagine the impact on you and your organization of this new perception of the universe. Put down on newsprint, using small groups of people, your response to this increased possibility of the existence of extraterrestrial intelligent life elsewhere in the universe.

Exercise 5: Guilt-Free Energy from the Sun

Purpose: To deal with the possibility of unlimited energy. It is the year 1995, and a consortium of six large USA companies (with some financial insurance from the government) has just completed the assembly in outer space of the first full-scale solar-powered satellite. It is fifteen miles long and three miles wide and contains fourteen billion photovoltaic cells (which transform sunlight directly into electrical energy) and is in a geostationary orbit 22,000 miles above earth. It microwaves enough energy (10,000 megawatts) down to earth to fill the needs of one million homes.

Procedure: Imagine what it would be like to have a source of energy that did not depend on either nuclear power or fossil fuels. Put down on newsprint your responses to this technological possibility. (Boeing Company in Seattle, Washington, is currently working on a million dollar study contract to determine the feasibility of just such a unit!)

- Does it scare you?
- Does it give you a feeling of hope?
- Would you be willing to risk doing it by a slight increase in your taxes?
- What can you extrapolate from this development twenty more years into the future?
- What social change will occur?

Exercise 6: Individual Responsibility and Global Information

Purpose: To prepare for meaningful global data collection and sharing. It is the year 1989, and a United Nations consorti-

um, including the United States, China, and Russia, has just completed a "global information network" from which the following information is available simultaneously in each country on a year round, daily basis:

- Crop forecasts (wheat, rice, corn, potatoes)
- Conditions of crops (need for irrigation/fertilization)
- Accurate forecasts of weather
- Sea state conditions
- Renewable resource inventory and assessment
- Land productivity estimates
- Early warning of changes affecting quality and quantity of renewable resources
- Conservation practices assessment
- Pollution detection and impact evaluation

Try to imagine what it would be like to have available *all* the information necessary to "manage the resources of an entire planet."

Procedure: Working in small groups of four or five, put on newsprint some of the human, economic, political, and ethical implications related to this possibility. (NASA is currently working on just such a system.) Can we anticipate our response to it?

Exercise 7: Dick Tracy Come True

Purpose: To plan for the possibilities of continued expansion of electronic communication capability. It is the year 1990, and the "wrist radio" has been perfected, allowing *global* point-to-point communications. Units are available for the price of a current portable tape recorder. Utilizing satellite transmission systems, a person can talk to anyone in the world who has a similar unit. (Recently the associate administrator of NASA's space and terrestrial applications programs projected this concept as the "next giant step" in communications.)

Procedure: Break into small groups of three or four persons and try to imagine the potential social impact of this system that bypasses all present methods.

CHAPTER VI
IMAGING AND CHOOSING OUR PREFERRED FUTURES

It's quite a step—of discipline, commitment, adventure—for a person or group to move from the inquiry posture about "What is going on in our world" and "What might happen or is going to happen in our world" to the action posture of "What do I/we want to make happen?" "What future would we prefer, and what do we need to do to move toward it?"

If we stay vague, we don't run the risk of being disappointed. If we stay uncommitted, we don't face the danger of accountability. If we "let things happen," we can feel freer to be spontaneous about "whatever comes up."

But by not planning there may be less chance of things happening that I will like. Am I in danger of "drifting" and getting bored, losing energy, if I don't have clear goals? Am I really freer when I'm reacting instead of planning?

These are natural dilemma questions we use in the activities provided in this chapter, and Exercise 1 helps us to focus on them.

Because we believe all of us can benefit by risking the venture of projecting and assessing the future we would really like for ourselves, we have provided Exercises 2 and 3 to help you move into the future, and in the process to help you clarify some of the features, ingredients, you would most like in your future. There will be a chance to share ideas and judgments about most preferred futures.

We invite you *not* to look at the end of the chapter until you've done Exercise 2 or 3, because each of the two of us has shared our images of a preferred future. We think it will be more fun to do your own first and then compare.

Exercise 1: Choosing a Future: An Internal Dialogue

An active "group meeting" is going on inside each of us all the time—a medley of voices that are all part of us, sometimes agreeing and sometimes disagreeing. It is helpful for us to recognize and accept this "pluralism" in us. It may seem easier to listen to the voices interacting outside of us, but it is a very

important source of wisdom to practice listening to our "internal society" as it has been called. We invite you to try listening in on your internal voices as they are commenting on the question, "Is it a good idea to spend time and energy thinking about and deciding about the future I would like to have and how to make it happen?" To help you record the points of view you hear expressed by your internal voices, we suggest you jot them down as quotes under the following three headings on a piece of paper:

Pro: In Favor of	Anti: Not in Favor of	Indifferent
"_____"	"_____"	"_____"
_____	_____	_____

When you've heard all the voices you can, then (*) star the two or three loudest or most influential voices.

Now we suggest you share with each other *what* you heard and *why* you think the voices are expressing the opinions they are.

To provide new experience and data for this dialogue, we invite you to try Exercises 2 and 3.

Exercise 2: Choosing a Future: A Discovery Trip

Purpose: To formulate some images of desired future for self, or your organization; to share priority thinking; to share the reasons or values and assumptions underlying the judgments.

Procedure: You are going to take a trip ahead in time and jot down your observations of what you see. You can choose to do this alone or in small table groups. If you are taking the trip alone, have pen and writing pad; if together, have a newsprint sheet on the table with one of you acting as recorder. Write carefully enough so others will be able to read it when you post it on the wall.

You are invited to choose your own "time jump." Many persons and groups choose one year, others choose two or five years.

In your mind *go ahead to that time.* You are looking down from a flying carpet on your balliwick, your organization, your

community, or whatever arena of observation you want to define.

What do you see happening *that pleases you very much?* Write it down *in the present tense.* You are there! Be very concrete about your observations—decisions and actions of people, interactions and relations between them; procedures, structures, programs, policies, etc. Remember you are looking for things that *please you very much,* as images of your future.

Don't discuss and decide as a group. Let the images flow out and get written down. Help each other to be *clear and concrete* about what is being seen.

When several persons or groups have done this activity, post your sheets on the wall and read all the images. Each of you has five votes as you read. Check the five images that please you as most desirable images of the future, as good images to work toward.

Review those checked most frequently. Is there quite a bit of consensus? What do the differences in priority mean? Subgroups with different values? Different ideas about the mission of the organization, or about needs, or what?

Exercise 3: Alternative Futures: Our Preferences

Purpose: With reference to some aspects or continuities of our world, to project several alternative future scenarios, and then to explore the reasons for preference among the alternatives.

Procedure: Decide which aspects of your world you want to focus on; e.g., the family, bureaucracy, organizational governance, transportation, population growth of women, the economy, our political system, food supply, employment volunteerism, recreation, technology, etc.

Each subgroup of 3-5 persons works on one topic.

Decide what time jump you want—two years, five years, ten years, or the year 2000.

Write at least three different scenarios of what has come to pass by your chosen year in regard to the nature, operation, characteristics of the phenomenom you are projecting. You will need several paragraphs to write each scenario vividly and descriptively. It will probably be easier to work with later if you write each scenario on a separate sheet.

Can you predict which alternatives your colleagues will prefer? Why?

What are your own preferences?

We suggest everyone post their scenarios and wander, read, and check their preferred scenarios in each topic area.

You might discuss:

1. Reasons for preferences
2. Ideas for additional alternative scenarios
3. Which seem most probable
4. Our chances of doing something to influence the actualization of the alternatives we prefer.

Sharing Some of Our Images

To share the fun with you, we have separately projected some of our desired images for the future—for one year and five years—and marked our priorities; then we have shared a brief bit of dialogue we had about the reasons for our priorities. How do these compare with yours? Similar? Different? In what way(s)?

AUG. '79 – IMAGES OF AUG. '80 THAT PLEASE ME – RON LIPPITT

1. The joint project with the Japanese YMCA on youth in voluntary activities for community service has been funded.
2. My son and I are writing a book together.
3. I'm designing a workshop series on "Achieving Your Future" with Ed Lindaman—for church, Y, community groups.
4. I'm ten pounds lighter than in June '78 and maintaining my exercise and diet schedule vigorously.

AUG. '79 – IMAGES OF AUG. '80 THAT PLEASE ME – ED LINDAMAN

1. I have almost achieved my goal of reducing my refined sugar consumption to ten per cent of what it was three years ago.
2. My wife and I have deliberately set aside "special time" for our first little granddaughter who now visits us each month.
3. My exercise program is fully locked into my daily schedule, and it seems as though it will continue the rest of my life.
4. Planning is now complete for a series of "futures seminars/workshops" for small groups of clergy and layministers, each lasting a full week and providing the facilitation skills to allow replication back home.

5. My project on training volunteers to provide fun-full educational experiences on school buses in the Los Angeles desegregation program is underway.

5. My wife and I are spending one entire weekend a month at our lake cabin which we have now completed.

AUG. '79 – IMAGES OF AUG. '84 THAT PLEASE ME – RON LIPPITT

1. The design Eva and I published in 1978 for mobilizing the city power figures to collaborate on improving the quality of community life is spreading with try-outs in 50 cities.
2. My wife is mobile, arthritis arrested.
3. The Alliance for Volunteerism has a membership of 100 volunteer organizations and is conducting linkage and collaboration between government and the private sector.
4. I'm on my way to my 70th birthday and feeling active and full of the joy of living.
5. I am heavily involved as a member of the President's Commission on a National Youth Policy.

AUG. '79 – IMAGES OF AUG. '84 THAT PLEASE ME – ED LINDAMAN

1. My work schedule is an average of three days a week and considerably more time is now spent in volunteer roles having to do with helping others "think in the future tense."
2. Have joined a "social think tank" group of eleven persons from across the United States who are now issuing "thought papers" and conducting discussion experiences to bring before thoughtful persons a wholistic view of possible and preferred social futures.
3. Have a part-time volunteer assignment with the Northwest Regional Foundation, Spokane, Washington, to assist in neighborhood self-development projects and in small-town-growth issues.
4. We are finally growing most of our garden vegetables and have set aside enough time to truly enjoy the work involved.
5. I spend a couple of days a month working alongside my children.

RON LIPPITT: Well, Ed, I found it exciting to stay in between fantasy and prediction—images of what could be if I worked on making them come true. It was

interesting, too, to discover that quite a few "health images" came forth. This may not be as true with someone who is younger that I am.

ED LINDAMAN: My first reaction, Ron, was how much concentration it took to finally focus in on what I did prefer. It just proves that none of us thinks in the future tense without some struggles.

RON LIPPITT: In looking at my list, I notice that most of my images involve collaboration with others, I guess that reflects my strong feeling that worthwhile and influential actions require concerted team work.

ED LINDAMAN: In looking over my list, I can see where I am projecting quite a major shift in my lifestyle, allowing more time for the little human beings... and I guess more time for myself. Maybe this comes out of being at an age where there are many demands on my time by others and a fantasizing that some of that can be reduced.

RON LIPPITT: There is an interesting perspective in most of my listings that seems to say I don't think so much of "doing it" as "helping or causing it to happen."

ED LINDAMAN: It was fun to note that what I now do as an avocation seems to be taking on vocational attributes five years hence. This will be interesting to watch and see if it develops—or if I can accept its development—now that I know that is what I prefer.

RON LIPPITT: All in all, both of us had quite similar priorities and a comparable value base. Helath, time to help others, change in lifestyle to less complexity, awareness of our interdependence.

ED LINDAMAN: I liked what happened when we did this.

A Closing Comment for Chapter VI:

We are now ready for the challenge of the next chapter which addresses the questions: "How can we plan effectively to realize our preferred futures?" and "What do we do if things don't seem to be working out?"

You will need to use your data from Exercise 2 to move ahead into the activities of Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII
CONNECTING IMAGES TO ACTION

The ambivalences we explored in Chapter VI were about risks involved in committing ourselves to a desired future. These ideas were very important for us to cope with in the projecting of images and the defining of priorities.

Now we face an even more challenging and universal conflict: Whether we should put energy and commitment into actually trying to carry out, to accomplish the future we imagine.

Our growing up and educational experiences have tended to separate good intentions from action. We have been graded for knowing the right answers, not for motivation or skill to carry them out. And as our worlds have become more complex, it has become more acceptable to resist the impulse to action with such rationales as, "It wouldn't be feasible," "It would cost too much," "It's too idealistic," "It's impractical," "There's not enough support," "I'm not prepared," "It's too risky."

One futurist has demonstrated that our capabilities to solve problems have been increasing as rapidly as the complexities of our problems, but that we have made little progress in actually using our know-how to *do.*

Follow-up studies of training events designed to prepare better teachers, or parents, or supervisors, or managers, typically discover that there is very little carryover into action of the new knowledge and good intentions developed during the training program.

This is the challenge for us!

What are some ways we can actually connect our images of a desired future to successful steps of action toward actualizing such a future?

The following exercises have been helpful to many persons, groups and organizations. You'll need your "desired image" data from Chapter VI as a resource for you now.

Exercise 1: Clarifying and Specifying the Future Image

Purpose: To develop a priority future image into a clear specification of desired outcomes to provide a target for concrete planning.

Procedure: Working as *goal-development teams* of two to four persons, select one of your priority future images from Exercise 2 or 3 of Chapter VI.

Jot down a list of all the concrete clues or examples of what it would be like if that image were achieved. How could someone who is evaluating or measuring record evidence that the goal had been reached?

When you have been as specific as you can, ask another group to consult with you. Share your overall image and the specific examples of it that you have developed. Their job is to probe any lack of clarity and to add any additional examples they can suggest.

Be ready to help them in the same way.

You will now be ready for Exercise 2.

Comment:

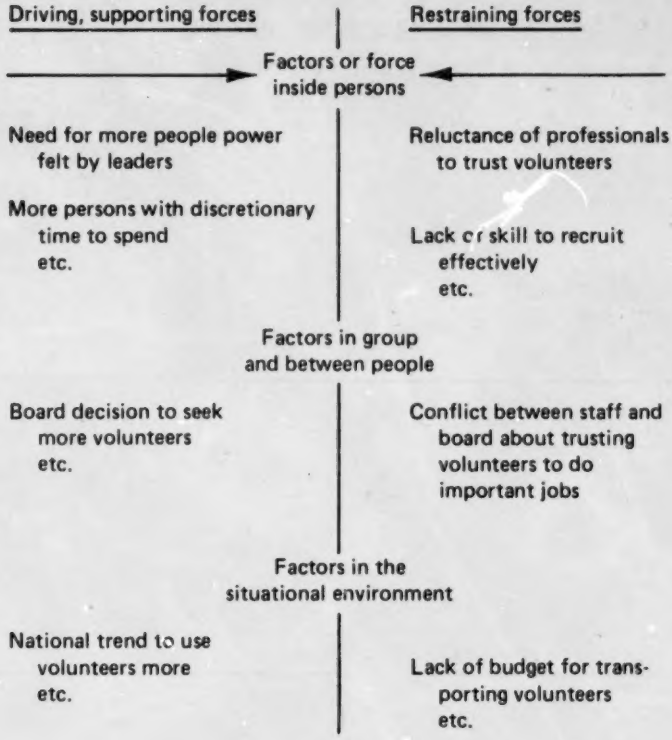
There is a temptation to rush through this step. It is a very crucial one which will be the basis of successful planning for action.

Exercise 2:
Restraints and Supports for Action Toward Our Image

Purpose: To diagnose what must be thought about in planning the strategy of action toward your future image.

Procedure: This diagnostic technique, developed by Kurt Lewin, is known as "forcefield analysis." It is based on the notion that for any goal one can discover some *driving forces* which will facilitate movement toward the goal (supports, resources motivations, skills, etc.), and *restraining forces* which inhibit movement toward the goal (resistances, lack of resources, traditions, lack of motivation, fear of risk, etc.). Make a forcefield chart similar to the model which follows and identify all the driving forces and restraining forces you can in regard to your particular goal.

Goal Statement (example): To Recruit 100 More Volunteers by May 1980


Driving, supporting forces
Restraining forces
Factors or force inside persons
Need for more people power felt by leaders
More persons with discretionary time to spend
etc.
Reluctance of professionals to trust volunteers
Lack of skill to recruit effectively
etc.
Factors in group and between people
Board decision to seek more volunteers
etc.
Conflict between staff and board about trusting volunteers to do important jobs
Factors in the situational environment
National trend to use volunteers more
etc.
Lack of budget for transporting volunteers
etc.

This is just a brief example. You will have many more forces in your diagnosis Some factors will appear on both sides. We may not feel very sure about some and will need to get more facts.

It is usually helpful to share your force-field diagnosis with another team, or a colleague who knows your situation, to check your identification of forces and to get ideas about additional forces you haven't considered. As you will see in Exercise 3, the more complete your assessment is of the force-field situation, the better the chances of successful action will be.

Exercise 3: Planning Action Steps

Purpose: To use your force-field diagnosis as a basis for brainstorming action possibilities and selecting action steps.

Procedure: Look over your force field and check the two, three, or four most important restraining forces to be dealt with (i.e., reduced, removed, etc.) and the two to four most important driving forces to be mobilized, utilized to facilitate movement toward your goal.

Now comes one of the most creative activities!

Look at the restraining forces you have checked and *brain storm* all the ideas you can think of for dealing with those restraints. List your ideas on a large sheet.

Use the rules of brainstorming which are:

1. Say everything that comes to mind
2. No discussion
3. No evaluations or judgments
4. Repetition and piggybacking are O.K.

Using these rules will greatly increase your productivity. Now for your second brainstorm. Looking at the left-hand driving force side of the force field, list all the ways you can think of to use, mobilize, enhance, stimulate supports for action toward your goal image.

Now comes Phase 2 of this exercise . . . selecting your ideas for action and planning to act.

Review your brainstorm lists, then discuss:

What two or three actions seem most important, feasible, strategic for dealing with restraints?

And what two or three steps of mobilizing supports for action seem most important as starters?

Now fill out the following start-up action-plan sheet.

Start-up Action Plan Sheet

Our Goal Image _____

_____

First steps in mobilizing, using support forces	Who will do what to initiate the action?	When?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

First steps in dealing with restraining forces	Who will involve whom to do what?	When?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

When will we check on progress of the action?

Who will call, or convene, whom? When?

Reminder notes of my commitment:

Exercise 4: "Actions Speak Louder Than Words"

Purpose: To increase the chances of successful action by rehearsing before "playing for keeps."

Procedure: The best chance of connecting our good intentions and plans successfully to skillful action is to try our action in a supportive situation where we can get feedback and improve our

action. Role-playing and simulation are the most widely used methods.* Below are two references giving detailed directions for these techniques. The following brief description outlines the essence of the procedure. Many of you have experienced it and can help with the flow of the activity.

1. Work in trios if you can.

2. Select one of the action steps from your plan that you would like to try out.

3. Decide who is the practicer (P) or rehearser, who is the receiver (R) of the action-effort, and who is the observer (O), feedback discussion leader.

4. Decide where the action takes place, how the interaction is initiated, what relationships and attitudes the two have toward each other and toward the task or topic or issue they are interacting about.

5. Start the action.

6. O stops the action in a minute or two (don't let it go on!) and initiates the discussion by:
   - asking P how s/he feels about progress toward objective
   - asking R how s/he is being affected by P's approach
   - O then shares observations

7. Group brainstorms alternative action ideas, P jots down.

8. Start over, re-try, using feedback.

9. Stop and discuss again, focus on differences.

10. Decide whether to re-try again, whether someone wants to reverse roles to enhance learning, or whether to go on to additional action tryout.

Comments: Some rehearsals may call for group situations, others for telephone conversations. Try out whatever anyone wants to rehearse in order to become more comfortable and competent with the action. This sequence of exercises is adapted from: Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ron Lippitt, *Taking Your Meetings Out of The Doldrums.* (Tool Kit F, p. 87) La Jolla, California, University Associates, 1975.

*Robert Fox and Mark Chesler, *Role-Playing Methods in the Classroom.* Chicago, Science Research Associates, 1966.

Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ron Lippitt, *Taking Your Meetings Out of The Doldrums.* (Tool Kit F, p. 87) La Jolla, California, University Associates, 1975.

CHAPTER VIII
CELEBRATING PROGRESS TOWARD YOUR FUTURE

One dilemma, and challenge, for most of us is that the more articulate and clear we become about a desired future, the more conscious we are of the sizable gap between what we would like and the way things are. And for most of us this is a source of frustration, guilt and depression, as well as a push toward "doing something."

Quite frequently this frustration and depression reduces our motivation and energy, sometimes leading us to withdraw and avoid the pain of living with the discrepancy.

So the challenge to us is: How can we take seriously the things that need to be done, feel motivated and energetic about "closing the gap," rather than becoming depressed and turned off?

We believe the two key notions in solving this problem are:

1. Step-by-step structuring of the path toward the goal
2. Celebration of progress.

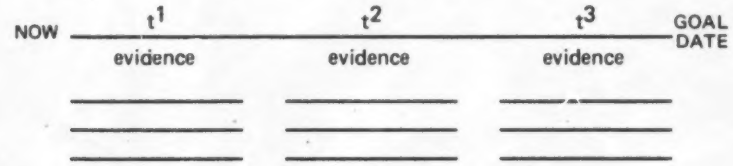
Here are some activities we suggest you try to support your movement toward your desired future.

Exercise 1: Taking Steps Toward the Future

In the last section, we looked at a way to develop the skills to take start-up initiatives in getting action going.

Here is another challenge: Can we identify some steps of progress that we think of as steppingstones toward our goal? How can we know we are making progress? When could we know?

We suggest that you draw a visual line for the time from *now* to *future image date.*



Then decide on appropriate times to check both on progress and on what the specific evidences of progress would be.

- What kind of data will you need to collect to get your evidence?
- How will you get it?
- Who is responsible for the checking, or convening, or whatever is required for reminder and review?

Exercise 2: We Deserve a Celebration

The most neglected element in the strategy and process of achieving the futures we want is the element of celebrating progress. To avoid becoming disheartened by the gap between the distant goal and where we are now, we need the heartening experience of seeing that we are making progress and the renewing experience of shared celebration.

Here are some recommendations:

1. Look at the progress path you created in the last exercise. When will you check your progress?
2. If you discover you are pleased with your progress, how might you celebrate? Brainstorm all the ideas you can think of. It may be a rather strange topic, but let yourselves go and really brainstorm.
3. Look over your list. Which ideas appeal most to you? Who will take any needed "celebration leadership" or preparation?
4. If you find you haven't made the progress you hoped for, but you can discover *why* and can plan for correction or new direction, then this deserves a celebration too.

In fact, just agreeing and planning to celebrate calls for a celebration right now. How could you celebrate? O.K., let's not wait!

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